

# The how and why behind storm names

BY JAYME KING



King

As a local television meteorologist, one of the top weather questions I am asked is, "How are tropical systems named and why do we name them in the first place?"

Many years ago, the meteorological community figured by naming tropical storms and hurricanes, people would remember the names of the storms, keeping populations vigilant and aware.

It also made the meteorologist's job of communicating specifics of certain storm more effective, letting those in the storm's path know how to prepare. Before the start of each season, experts approve a previously crafted formal list of names.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center started this ritual nearly 70 years ago. Currently, The World Meteorological Organization develops, maintains and approves tropical system names.

In 1950 the U.S. National Hurricane Center developed storm-naming for the Atlantic Ocean storms. Storms were named according to the alphabetic sequence.

The names used were recycled year after year. For example, the first hurricane of a season was always named "Able," the second "Baker," then "Charlie" and so on.

The naming process was revised in 1953 and storms were given female names to avoid the repetitive use of names. By doing this, the National Weather Service was following in the footsteps of Naval meteorologists, who named the storms after women, similar to how ships were traditionally

## 2019 ATLANTIC NAMES

Andrea	Humberto	Olga
Barry	Imelda	Pablo
Chantal	Jerry	Rebekah
Dorian	Karen	Sebastien
Erin	Lorenzo	Tanya
Fernand	Melissa	Van
Gabrielle	Nestor	Wendy

named for women.

Then, in 1979, the system was revised yet again to include both female and male storm names.

Tropical storms are given names when they display a rotating circulation pattern and wind speeds of at least 39 miles per hour. A tropical storm develops into a hurricane when wind speeds reach 74 mph.

Lists of hurricane names have been developed for many of the major oceans around the world. Today, there are six lists of hurricane names in use for Atlantic Ocean systems. These lists rotate, one each year. That means the list for this year will come up again six years from now.

The only exception would be a storm name that was particularly damaging. These names are retired for sensitivity, legal and historical reasons. You will never see another storm named "Katrina," which was retired in 2005 after the tremendous impact on New Orleans. The same can be said for "Charley," which was retired after the 2004 Atlantic hurricane season following the devastation of Southwest Florida.

*Jayme King is a Fox 35 meteorologist.*

## Using a generator safely

Generators can be deadly if used improperly. Here is what you need to do to use a generator safely:

- Do NOT use the generator inside. They can cause carbon monoxide poisoning and also could start a fire.
- Do have a carbon monoxide detector.
- Do not place it on a patio, in a garage or under an eave.
- Keep the generator at least 20 feet away from your house
- Do not keep the generator near a window.
- Do not refill generators with gas while it's hot.
- Do not overload it with too many appliances.
- Use recommended extension cords.

- Store the gasoline for it safely.
- Use a fuel stabilizer.

*Richard Tribou*



STAFF/MCT

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